

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 19, 2007

Mr. David Paulison  
Director  
Federal Emergency Management  
Administration  
500 C Street SW  
Washington, DC 20472

Mr. Steven C. Preston  
Administrator  
Small Business Administration  
409 Third Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20416-2230

Dear Director Paulison and Administrator Preston:

On August 19, 2007, eight counties in Minnesota received significant flood damage, resulting in a Presidential Disaster Declaration (FEMA-1717-DR & SBA-11004/11005). Today, exactly two months after the flooding began, individuals, business owners, and communities alike are still working around the clock to clean up, file the necessary paperwork and make long term recovery plans. The individuals and businesses that suffered from the floods must have every opportunity to receive the federal assistance which they need and to which they are entitled.

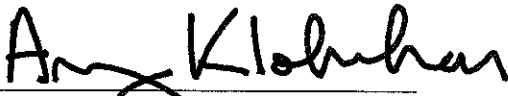
After meetings with our constituents and FEMA/SBA staff over the past 60 days, it has become clear to us that the public does not have an accurate understanding of the federal and state process and because of this, application return rates are extraordinarily low. Given, that the October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2007 FEMA/SBA application deadline for physical loss loans is just days away, we request that you extend this deadline at least until November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2007, based on the following considerations:

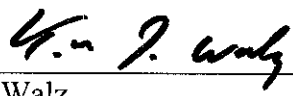
1. The State of Minnesota authorized several recovery programs for individuals and businesses, and many of our constituents indicated they were told that if they have not applied through the SBA first, they will not be permitted to apply for these state programs. This fact, and a December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2007 deadline for applying for state programs, will affect how individuals and businesses evaluate their need for assistance from all involved agencies. Allowing the SBA deadline for physical loss loans to pass this month will preclude a number of those affected by the flooding from applying for and receiving state aid in the future.
2. FEMA/SBA officials on the ground in Minnesota recently informed us that over 70% of individuals and over 80% of small business owners, that have requested assistance applications have not yet returned them. While this paperwork has been widely distributed by FEMA/SBA staff, there is confusion about loan terms which we believe is keeping many from applying for aid.

3. The FEMA application deadline for persons affected by the flooding is also October 22, 2007. As you well know, FEMA is responsible for distributing SBA application paperwork after FEMA officials have reviewed the initial application. For those who are applying for FEMA aid this week, the concurrent deadlines could prevent them from applying for SBA loans. We would respectfully suggest staggered deadlines, in two week intervals that would allow FEMA applications, followed by SBA applications, in such a way that the State deadline of December 22<sup>nd</sup> is still attainable for the people of Minnesota

With these factors in mind, we respectfully ask that you extend these deadlines to allow additional time for homeowners and businesses to gather accurate information, determine which recovery opportunities will best suit their needs, and apply for the aid necessary to build for their futures. We look forward to your response and working with you in the future.

Respectfully,

  
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Amy Klobuchar  
UNITED STATES SENATOR

  
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Tim Walz  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS